

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 IO-13 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 443
INFO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 4042

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SP, LI,
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE OAU CONSIDERATION OF THE SO-CALLED CANARY
ISLANDS INDEPENDENCE ISSUE

1. THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS (BERDEJO)
CALLED IN EMBOFF YESTERDAY TO EXPRESS SPANISH CONCERN
OVER AN ALGERIAN INITIATIVE IN THE OAU TO RAISE IN THE
BODY'S COMMITTEE DEALING WITH COLONIAL MATTERS THE CANARY
ISLANDS IN AN UPCOMING JUNE 15 MEETING.

2. BERDEJO POINTED OUT, CORRECTLY, THAT THE CANARIES ARE
HISTORICALLY AND ETHNICALLY SPANISH, ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY
SO WITH THE ONLY NON-SPANISH A SMALL GROUP OF MERCHANTS
FROM INDIA. CONSEQUENTLY, THERE IS NO LEGITIMATE COL-
ONIAL ASPECT TO THEM, AND THE WHOLE AFFAIR IS ONLY
ANOTHER ASPECT OF ALGERIA'S EFFORTS TO HARASS THE SPANISH
FOR TURNING OVER THE SAHARA DE FACTO TO MOROCCAN CONTROL.
HE CITED OF COURSE ALGERIAN HOSPITALITY TO CUBILLO, THE
HEAD OF THE SELF-STYLED CANARIES LIBERATION MOVEMENT
(MPAIAC) AND THE MAN WHO CLAIMED CREDIT FOR HAVING
PLANTED THE BOMB IN THE LAS PALMAS AIRPORT THAT CAUSED
THE DIVERSION TO TENERIFE OF THE ILL-FATED PAN AM AND
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KLM FLIGHTS.

3. ACCORDING TO BERDEJO, THE OAU COMMITTEE HAD NEVER
OFFICIALLY TAKEN UP THE CANARIES IN THE PAST. THE
SPANISH RATHER EXPECT THAT THE VOTES ARE THERE TO KEEP
IT ON THE AGENDA. NONETHELESS, THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT
THE ATTITUDE OF THE LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE OAU WHO

HAS REPORTEDLY INDICATED THAT LIBERIA WOULD SUPPORT THE INCLUSION OF THIS ITEM ON THE COMMITTEE'S AGENDA. THE SPANISH HAVE NO REPRESENTATION IN MONROVIA AND DO NOT KNOW IF HE REFLECTS THE LIBERIAN ATTITUDE. HE ASKED IF WE MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE INQUIRIES ON SPAIN'S BEHALF IN MONROVIA. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ANY APPROACH ON OUR PART WOULD REQUIRE A JUDGMENT ON THE PART OF OUR EMBASSY IN MONROVIA AS TO HOW THE LIBERIANS WOULD REACT TO AN APPROACH BY US.

4. THE SPANISH ARE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE ON THE CANARIES JUST AS WE ARE IN SUCH MATTERS AS PUERTO RICO OR GUAM, AND THEY ARE FOND OF POINTING OUT THAT THE CANARIES ARE STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT AND LIE WITHIN THE ZONE OF THE U.S.-SPANISH TREATY. IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THE SPANISH THESE DAYS OFTEN PROBE, ON ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THEM, THE REALITY OF OUR POSTURE AS AN ALLY OF AN EMERGING DEMOCRATIC SPAIN. ADDITIONALLY, THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL OUR PAST DIFFICULTIES WITH SPANISH VOTES IN THE UN ON THE PRETENSIONS OF OTHER NATIONS TO PRONOUNCE ON U.S. INTERNAL AFFAIRS, SPECIFICALLY PUERTO RICO AND GUAM. (AS A SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL RECENTLY NOTED TO US, THE SPANISH UN AMBASSADOR HAS HAD A PENCHANT FOR TAKING THIRD WOULD POSITIONS REGARDLESS OF SPAIN'S OWN INTERESTS.) ON BOTH COUNTS IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE USEFUL TO TRY TO BE FORTHCOMING. WE CANNOT JUDGE FROM HERE OF COURSE, WHETHER AN APPROACH ON BEHALF OF THE SPANISH IN MONROVIA WOULD COMPLICATE U.S. INTERESTS THERE OR INDEED BE OF ANY USE TO THE

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SPANISH. WE WOULD APPRECIATE INSTRUCTIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. STABLER

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Message Attributes

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